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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

Dec. 18, 1953

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR/INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Proposal for the Periodic Revision of the National Intelligence Digest (NID) (For Board considerations).

PROBLEM

To vest responsibilities and establish procedures for revising the NID.

DISCUSSION

Background

1. The NID is primarily a compilation of abstracts of pertinent national and current intelligence.
2. The first edition was produced in November 1952 and was designed to accompany the compilation of current national security policies prepared by the National Security Council and to serve as a summary of highlights of national and current intelligence on all major areas of the world, including both intelligence information and estimates of probable developments and courses of action.
3. Although a partial revision was distributed in December 1952, a complete revision in July 1953 and another partial revision in December 1953, responsibilities for systematic revision of the NID have not been

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assigned, nor have procedures been established for discharging these
responsibilities.

4. Eighty copies of the NID are now disseminated within CIA, to the IAC agencies and to those other agencies concerned with national security. It is being widely used. The current edition is rapidly going out of date and it is therefore essential that a basic decision be reached as to its future. Since the last complete revision in July 1953, four sections have been revised to include some of the latest NIE's and SE's. However, approximately 35 pages are in need of revision; some of these are marginal, but it must disturb the user to read that Ibn Saud "has aged noticeably" when he knows that the old man is dead. In short, if the NID is to continue to be useful, a fast and cheap method of periodic revision must be devised.

Consumer Reaction

5. Reaction to the NID reveals that it satisfies a real need. There is no other publication which contains so much intelligence, estimative and current, in such a handy form. The proposed OCI Handbook complements but does not duplicate the NID.

6. A recent poll of NID users outside of CIA revealed that the overwhelming majority found it extremely useful, were emphatic in praising it, and expressed great interest in having more frequent revisions. Comments included: "I use it all the time. Good for trips to the Hill." (Easton of JIG); "Essential." (Elliott of ODM);

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"First thing I turn to." (Lippman of FOA); "We use it all the time."

(Craig of OCB). AFOIN requested and received additional copies.

Furthermore, DD/P has requested 19 extra copies for distribution to the Washington staff and the Senior Representatives abroad.

Basic Procedural Requirements

7. The NID should be reviewed once a month in order (a) that material from recently published NIE's and SE's be included as feasible, (b) that other estimative sections not covered by NIE's be kept valid and (c) that the factual sections be kept sufficiently current so as not to destroy the reader's confidence in the publication.

8. Due to the scope of the NID, it is essential that both O/NE and O/CI take part in its preparation. However, in view of its essentially estimative character, the final responsibility for its preparation and content must lie with O/NE.

9. It is estimated that, although the number would fluctuate, 7-10 pages would need revision each month. Time and money could be saved by having the revisions multilithed instead of printed. Maps and graphics would have to be printed, but this would be necessary only occasionally.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. It is recommended that the DD/I authorize the periodic revision of the NID in the following manner:

O/NE and O/CI will each designate two representatives, of senior grade, to a Digest Review Committee (DRC). An O/NE

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representative will serve as Chairman and O/NE will provide the
Committee's Secretary.

b. The DRC will be responsible for issuing the necessary
revisions of the NID once a month.

c. O/NE will be responsible for preparing the estimative
sections, while O/CI will be responsible for the current intelligence
sections and the graphics.

d. If he deems it necessary, the Chairman may refer any
section to the Board of National Estimates.

e. O/NE will be responsible for the distribution of the
revisions.

Sherman Kent
Assistant Director/National Estimates

Approval:

Concurrence:

Deputy Director/Intelligence

Assistant Director/Current Intelligence

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